

# Gronewold bids farewell

by Joan Mier

He began his career as a “wet behind the ears” 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant fresh out of Engineer Officer Candidate School nearly 35 years ago. After spending three years in the Army, he began his civilian career as a soil scientist – overseeing reforestation and vegetation management plans for lake projects in the Kansas City District. Dale Gronewold is now ready to end his career as this District’s top civilian, the Deputy District Engineer for Project Management, when he retires Jan. 2.



Photo by Derrick Johnson  
**Dale Gronewold**

“I want to retire while I still enjoy what I do and who I do it for,” he said. That ability to enjoy all of his jobs is part of what has made Gronewold such a good team player, known for always being willing to help others in their efforts to best serve the Corps.

He has held a variety of positions throughout his career, mostly in the Operations arena. He came to the Albuquerque District in 1997 as the Chief of the Operations Division. Prior to that he served as the Operations Manager for Harry S. Truman Dam and Reservoir in west central Missouri in the Kansas City District, a job he loved. Before that he was the project manager for Harlan County Lake in Southern Nebraska.

“The autonomy and responsibilities you have with field assignments are extremely rewarding,” he said. “I’ve enjoyed my current job for completely different reasons. I’ve enjoyed having more influence on the District, becoming more familiar with the military side of the house and seeing the fine facilities we design and construct for the Air Force.”

He said he is personally most proud of being given the opportunity to serve as the Deputy District Engineer for Project Management.

“For someone to come from the Operations side, someone who is not an engineer, to be offered this job is something I’m very proud of,” he said. “And I’m also very proud to have been part of an organization that has such a ‘can do’ attitude. People here don’t just talk, they get projects on the ground and do the work that is so important to our nation.”

Gronewold said the immediate challenge the District faces is the implementation of 2012. “But it’s going to ultimately be a rewarding challenge I believe,” he said. The difficulty at first will be to carry on the same kind of work the District has been producing in an environment where boundary lines in the areas of responsibility will become more blurred. “But Albuquerque District doesn’t have a monopoly on producing good work. Working with other districts is going to increase the region’s efficiency.” He pointed out that the District is already doing this with

the Los Angeles District as part of its military construction program. 2012 will apply that effort across the board in our other mission areas.

He firmly believes this District has a very bright future. “We have a tremendous reputation within the Corps and with our customers for our ability to produce and deliver quality projects,” Gronewold said. “And I leave the District with it having a significant workload this coming year because of that ability.”

But what will Gronewold, a man known for being longer on candor than patience, do in retirement?

“Oh I have about 20 job offers. Paint the house. Repair the shingles,” he joked. Seriously, he said he plans to stay in the Albuquerque area and take a year off, traveling and perhaps doing some volunteer work in addition to his required home repairs.

When asked what he would miss most about his job here, he said it would be the people. “That includes the commanders I’ve worked with,” he said. “I’ve enjoyed watching and being a part of a commander’s growth in a job that most consider to be their most rewarding assignment. I really appreciate all the support the people here have given me and it’s been great to work with such a tremendous bunch of professionals.” □